

Assembly Bill No. 1811

CHAPTER 94

An act to amend Section 149.5 of the Streets and Highways Code, relating to transportation.

[Approved by Governor July 8, 2014. Filed with Secretary of State July 8, 2014.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1811, Buchanan. High-occupancy vehicle lanes.

Existing law authorizes the Sunol Smart Carpool Lane Joint Powers Authority and the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency to conduct, administer, and operate a value pricing high-occupancy vehicle program, on specified highway corridors, that may authorize the entry and use of high-occupancy vehicle lanes by single-occupant vehicles for a fee. Existing law requires that the implementation of the program ensure that specified levels of service be maintained at all times in the high-occupancy vehicle lanes and that unrestricted access to the lanes by high-occupancy vehicles be available at all times.

This bill would authorize the program to require a high-occupancy vehicle to have an electronic transponder or other electronic device for law enforcement purposes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 149.5 of the Streets and Highways Code is amended to read:

149.5. (a) (1) Notwithstanding Sections 149 and 30800 of this code, and Section 21655.5 of the Vehicle Code, the Sunol Smart Carpool Lane Joint Powers Authority (SSCLJPA), consisting of the Alameda County Transportation Commission and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, may conduct, administer, and operate a value pricing high-occupancy vehicle program on the Sunol Grade segment of State Highway Route 680 (Interstate 680) in Alameda and Santa Clara Counties and the Alameda County Transportation Commission may conduct, administer, and operate a program on a corridor within Alameda County for a maximum of two transportation corridors in Alameda County pursuant to this section in coordination with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and consistent with Section 21655.6 of the Vehicle Code.

(2) The program, under the circumstances described in subdivision (b), may direct and authorize the entry and use of the high-occupancy vehicle lanes in the corridors identified in paragraph (1) by single-occupant vehicles

for a fee. The fee structure for each corridor shall be established from time to time by the administering agency. A high-occupancy vehicle lane may only be operated as a high-occupancy toll (HOT) lane during the hours that the lane is otherwise restricted to use by high-occupancy vehicles.

(3) The administering agency for each corridor shall enter into a cooperative agreement with the Bay Area Toll Authority to operate and manage the electronic toll collection system.

(b) Implementation of the program shall ensure that Level of Service C, as measured by the most recent issue of the Highway Capacity Manual, as adopted by the Transportation Research Board, is maintained at all times in the high-occupancy vehicle lanes, except that, subject to a written agreement between the department and the administering agency that is based on operating conditions of the high-occupancy vehicle lanes, Level of Service D shall be permitted on the high-occupancy vehicle lanes. If Level of Service D is permitted, the department and the administering agency shall evaluate the impacts of these levels of service on the high-occupancy vehicle lanes, and indicate any effects on the mixed-flow lanes. Continuance of Level of Service D operating conditions shall be subject to the written agreement between the department and the administering agency. Unrestricted access to the lanes by high-occupancy vehicles shall be available at all times, except that the program may require a high-occupancy vehicle to have an electronic transponder or other electronic device for law enforcement purposes. At least annually, the department shall audit the level of service during peak traffic hours and report the results of that audit at meetings of the administering agency.

(c) Single-occupant vehicles that are certified or authorized by the administering agency for entry into, and use of, the high-occupancy vehicle lanes identified in paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) are exempt from Section 21655.5 of the Vehicle Code, and the driver shall not be in violation of the Vehicle Code because of that entry and use.

(d) The administering agency shall carry out the program in cooperation with the department pursuant to a cooperative agreement that addresses all matters related to design, construction, maintenance, and operation of state highway system facilities in connection with the value pricing high-occupancy vehicle program. With the assistance of the department, the administering agency shall establish appropriate traffic flow guidelines for the purpose of ensuring optimal use of the high-occupancy toll lanes by high-occupancy vehicles without adversely affecting other traffic on the state highway system.

(e) (1) Agreements between the administering agency, the department, and the Department of the California Highway Patrol shall identify the respective obligations and liabilities of those entities and assign them responsibilities relating to the program. The agreements entered into pursuant to this section shall be consistent with agreements between the department and the United States Department of Transportation relating to programs of this nature. The agreements shall include clear and concise procedures for enforcement by the Department of the California Highway Patrol of

laws prohibiting the unauthorized use of the high-occupancy vehicle lanes, which may include the use of video enforcement. The agreements shall provide for reimbursement of state agencies, from revenues generated by the program, or other funding sources that are not otherwise available to state agencies for transportation-related projects, for costs incurred in connection with the implementation or operation of the program.

(2) The revenue generated from the program shall be available to the administering agency for the direct expenses related to the operation (including collection and enforcement), maintenance, construction, and administration of the program. Administrative expenses shall not exceed 3 percent of the revenues.

(3) All net revenue generated by the program that remains after payment of direct expenses pursuant to paragraph (2) shall be allocated pursuant to an expenditure plan adopted biennially by the administering agency for transportation purposes within the program area. The expenditure plan may include funding for the following:

(A) The construction of high-occupancy vehicle facilities, including the design, preconstruction, construction, and other related costs of the northbound Interstate 680 Sunol Smart Carpool Lane project.

(B) Transit capital and operations that directly serve the authorized corridors.

(f) (1) The administering agency may issue bonds, refunding bonds, or bond anticipation notes, at any time to finance construction and construction-related expenditures of programs adopted pursuant to subdivision (a) and construction and construction-related expenditures that are included in the expenditure plan adopted pursuant to paragraph (3) of subdivision (e), payable solely from the revenues generated from the respective programs.

(2) The maximum bonded indebtedness that may be outstanding at any one time shall be an amount equal to the sum of the principal of, and interest on, the bonds, but not to exceed the estimated revenues generated from the respective programs.

(3) Bonds shall be issued pursuant to a resolution adopted by a two-thirds vote of the governing board of the administering agency. The resolution shall state all of the following:

(A) The purposes for which the proposed debt is to be incurred.

(B) The estimated cost of accomplishing those purposes.

(C) The amount of the principal of the indebtedness.

(D) The maximum term the bonds proposed to be issued shall run before maturity.

(E) The maximum rate of interest to be paid, which shall not exceed the maximum allowable by law.

(F) The denomination or denominations of the bonds, which shall not be less than five thousand dollars (\$5,000).

(G) The form of the bonds, including, without limitation, registered bonds and coupon bonds, to the extent permitted by federal law, the registration,

conversion, and exchange privileges, if any pertaining thereto, and the time when all of, or any part of, the principal becomes due and payable.

(H) Any other matters authorized by law.

(4) The bonds shall bear interest at a rate or rates not exceeding the maximum allowable by law, payable at intervals determined by the administering agency.

(5) The full amount of bonds may be divided into two or more series and different dates of payment fixed for the bonds of each series. A bond shall not be required to mature on its anniversary date.

(6) Any bond issued pursuant to this subdivision shall contain on its face a statement to the following effect:

“Neither the full faith and credit nor the taxing power of the State of California is pledged to the payment of principal of, or the interest on, this bond.”

(g) Not later than three years after the administering agency first collects revenues from the program authorized by this section, the administering agency shall submit a report to the Legislature on its findings, conclusions, and recommendations concerning the demonstration program authorized by this section. The report shall include an analysis of the effect of the HOT lanes on the adjacent mixed-flow lanes and any comments submitted by the department and the Department of the California Highway Patrol regarding operation of the lane.